

D A N G E R
O F
L I B E R T I S M,
Exemplified in the D E A T H
O F
ALTAMONT;

Extracted from Dr. YOUNG'S Centaur,
not Fabulous.

Shall I not visit for these things, saith the
LORD? Jerem. v. 9.



R O C H E S T E R,
Printed and Sold by T. F I S H E R,
1770.

D A N C E

OR

L I B E R T Y

EXAMINATION

OF

ALFRED



EXAMINATION

SHALL I not write for the things that are
LORDS

THE

ROCHESTER

Printed and Sold by T. FISHER

1775

THE
DANGER of LIBERTISM,
Exemplified in the DEATH
OF
ALTAMONT &c.

I AM about to represent unto you the last Hours of a Person of high Birth, and high Spirit; of great Parts, and strong Passions, every way accomplished, not least in Iniquity. His unkind Treatment was the Death of a most amiable Wife; and his great Extravagance, in effect, disinherited his only Child.

The death bed of a Profligate is next in Horror to that Abyss to which it leads. It has the most of Hell that is visible on Earth. And he that has seen it, has more than Faith to confirm him in his Creed. How dismal it is! Sickness excludes the Light of Heaven; and Sin its blessed Hope. Oh! double Darkness! more than Egyptian accutely to be felt,

Did

Did this poor pallid, scarce-animated **Man** dictate in the Cabinet of Pleasure? is this he who smote all their Hearts with Envy at his Pre-eminence in Guilt? See how he lies a sad, deserted Outcast on a narrow Isthmus between Time and Eternity? beyond the reach of human Help, and in despair of Divine! Conscience, which long had slept, 'awakes like a Giant refreshed with Wine;' lays waste all his former Thoughts, and Desires; and like a long deposed, now victorious Prince; imposes, inflicts its own Thoughts on his bleeding Heart: Its late soft whispers are Thunder in his Ears, and all means of Grace rejected, exploded, ridiculed, is the Bolt that strikes him dead. He lies a wreck of Man on the Shore of eternity; and the next Breath he draws, blows him off into Ruin.

Is this not a prime School of Wisdom? an agonizing Profligate, tho' silent out preaches the most Celebrated the Pulpit ever knew. But, if he speaks, his words, might instruct the best Instructors of Mankind.

However Truth, divine Truth, may, thro' Life, be wounded, and suppressed, still it is Insuppressible, Victorious, Immortal, That, tho' with Mountains overwhelmed, it will, one Day, burst out like the Fires of *Ætna*, visible, bright, and tormenting, as the most raging Flame. As now, (Oh my Friend) I shall too plainly prove.

Th:

The sad Evening before the Death of that noble Youth, whose last Hours suggested these Thoughts, I was with him. No one was there, but his Physician, and an Intimate whom he loved, and whom he had ruined. At my coming in, he said; You, and the Physician are come too late. — I have neither Life, nor Hope. You both aim at Miracles you would raise the Dead.

Heaven I said, was merciful.

‘Or I could not have been thus guilty. What has it not done to BLESS, and to SAVE me?— I have been too strong for Omnipotence! I pluck’d down Ruin.’

I said, the Blessed Redeemer—

‘Hold! Hold! you wound me! — This is the Rock on which I split -- I deny’d his Name.’

Refusing to hear any thing from me, or take any thing from the Physician, he lay silent, as far as sudden darts of pain would permit, ‘till the clock struck. Then with vehemence;

‘Oh, Time! Time! It is fit thou should’st thus strike thy Murderer to the heart.—How art thou fled for ever!--a Month!--Oh for a single Week! I ask not for Years; tho’ an Age were too little for the much I have to do.’

On my saying we could not do to much: That Heaven was a blessed place.—

‘So

‘ So much the worse ’Tis lost! ’Tis lost!
—Heaven is to me the Severest part of Hell.’
Soon after I propos’d Prayer.

‘ Pray you that can. I never pray’d. I
‘ cannot pray,---Nor need I. Is not Heaven
‘ on my side already? It closes with my con-
‘ science. Its severest strokes but second my
‘ own.’

His friend being much touch’d, even to
tears, at this (who could forbear? I could not)
with a most affectionate look, he said: Keep
‘ those tears for Thyself. I have undone
‘ thee.---Dost weep for me? That’s cruel.
‘ What can pain me more?

Here his friend, too much affected, would
have left him.

‘ No stay. Thou still may’st hope ;--There-
‘ fore hear me. How madly have I talk’d?
‘ How madly hast thou listen’d and believ’d?
‘ But look on my present State, as a full an-
‘ swer to thee, and to myself. This body is
‘ all weakness and pain; but my Soul, as if
‘ stung up by torment to greater strength and
‘ spirit, is full powerful to reason; full mighty
‘ to suffer. And that, which thus triumphs within
‘ the jaws of mortality, is doubtless, Immortal.—
‘ And as for a Deity, nothing less than an Al-
‘ mighty could inflict what I feel.’

I was about to congratulate this passive, in-
voluntary

voluntary, Confessor, on his asserting the two prime articles of his Creed, extorted by the Rack of Nature; when he thus, very passionately:

‘No, No! let me speak on. I have not long to speak---My much injured friend! my Soul, as my Body, lies in ruins; in scattered fragments of broken thought; Remorse for the past throws my thoughts on the Future. Worse dread of the Future, strikes it back on the Past. I turn, and turn, and find no ray. Didst thou feel half the mountain that is on me, thou wouldst struggle with the Martyr for his Stake; and bless Heaven for the Flames;—That is not an everlasting flame; That is not an unquenchable fire.’

How were we struck? yet, soon after, still more. With what an eye of distraction, what a face of despair, he cried out,

‘My principles have poisoned my Friend; my extravagance has beggar’d my Boy! my unkindness has murder’d my Wife! ---And is there another Hell?---Oh! Thou blasphem’d, yet most Indulgent, Lord God! Hell itself is a refuge, if it hides me from thy Frown.’

Soon

Soon after, his understanding fail'd. His
terrified imagination uttered horrors not to be
repeated, or ever forgot. And ere the Sun
(which I hope has seen few like him) arose, the
gay, young, noble, ingenious, accomplished,
and most wretched, ALTAMONT expired.

long to speak—My mind is now
Soul, as my Body, lies in flames;
fragments of broken thoughts
the past throws my thoughts on the future.
Words dead of the past, which is dead
on the past. I turn and turn, and find no
ray. I think that the moment that
is on me, thou wilt be with the light-
up for the light, however for the
flames;—That is an everlasting flame;
That is not an everlasting flame.

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How were we made?—For a few
more. With what an eye of distraction, what
a face of despair, he came out.

My principles have poisoned my
Friend; my passions have begg'd my
Boy! my unkindness has murder'd my Wife!
—And is there another Hell?—Oh! Yes
plagues! yet more plagues! Lord God!
Hell itself is a refuge, if it hides me from
thy Frown.

FINIS

1663

